Article captioned 'From dust to dust'

2491. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to an article which appeared in the Indian Express of the 13th September, 1987 uder the caption 'From dust to dust' to the effect that hundred of workers have died or are doomed to die of diseases contracted while shaping stones in semi-precious stone industry of Gujarat; if so, the details thereof; and

(b) what steps Government have taken to help the workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A team of officers from the Directorate General of Factory Advice Service and Labour Institutes (DGEASLI), Bombay was deputed to make an on-the-spot assessment of health status of the workers of the semi-precious stone-cutting industry in Shakarpur near Cambay in Gujarat. The team was assisted by the officers of the Government of Gujarat. The team found that few units come under the purview of the Factories Act as these employ less than ten workers. The concentration of dust exceeded the permissible limit value in most of the operations carried out in the units. The workers did not also use proper protective equipment. The team was of the view that the working conditions could cause occupational diseases such as pneumoconoisis and other respiratory diseases. It noted the prevalence of respiratory diseases including tuberculosis in the area. No women or children were seen working in the process by the export team.

The team has recommended that the management should be persuaded to provide local exhaust ventilation, enclosures for machinery and personal protective equipment. Training programmes should be organised for workers for appreciation of health hazards and the means for their prevention and control. It has also suggested that a detailed study should be conducted on the prevalence of occupational diseases in this area.

The recommendations of the team of exports are being communicated to the Government of Gujarat. The Directorate General of Factory Advice Service and Labour Institute (DGFASLI) will render necessary assistance to the State Government in the matter.

Misuse of terrorists and disruptive activities (Prevention) Act

2492. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Govnrnment have received reports regarding misuse of Terrorists and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1987 in different States, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the steps taken to check the abuse of the Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir. In respect of Government of Gujarat only.

(b) As and when complaints regarding misuse of the Terrorists and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act are received from a particular State, the matter is taken up with that State to ensure that there is no misuse of the provisions of the Act.

Problems of handloom weavers

2493. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to conduct an indepth study of the problems of handloom weavers in our country, and

(b) if so, what could be the mode of such a study?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Government has instituted a study through the Institute of Rural Management, Anand to assess the utility and effectiveness of various handloom development schemes which are being implemented by Government. These handloom development schemes are designed, *inter alia*, to removing the problems of handloom weavers. The current study will therefore naturally be conducted with reference to the problems of handloom weavers also. The following methodology is being adopted in the conduct of the study:—

(i) Collection of basic/field data from State Handloom authorities through two sets of detailed questionnaires.

(ii) Three case studies, one each on a 'successful' and 'not no successful' state, and one in the North-Eastern region focussing on the following aspects:—

1. Interface between the organisations and the weavers;

2. Interface between the organisations and the consumers/users of the products; and

3 Broad study of these organisations—both structure and processes.

Credit Policy

2494. SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether tightening of credit policy has been announced by the R.B I Governor as reported in the Times of India dated the 18th October, 1987 and if so, what are the details thereof; and

(b) whether this policy will affect the 'loan melas' organised in various States and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) Reserve Bank of India announced the credit policy for the second half of 1987-88 on October 17, 1987. The main objective of credit policy is to meet the credit requirements of agriculture, industry, exports and at the same time preventing excessive monetary expansion keeping in view the need for containing inflationary pressures. With a view to ensuring that the bank credit is not utilised for speculative activities in sensitive commodities, the requirements of minimum margins have been enhanced. The following main changes have been effected in the credit policy for the current busy season:

(i) Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) required to be maintaitned by the scheduled commercial banks with the Reserve Bank was increased from 9.5 per cent of their net demand and time liabilities to 10 per cent with effect from October 24, 1987.

(ii) Effective from October 19, 1987, the minimum margins in respect of paddy/rice, pulses, and other foodgrains (excluding wheat) were raised across the board by 15 percentage points.

(iii) The base for determining export refinance limits available to banks was retained unchanged at 100 per cent of the increase in the monthly average export credit in 1984 This ensures that the export refinance limits remains higher by about Rs. 430 crores than if the base had been brought forward to the monthly average level of export credit 1986

(b) The above credit policy will not affect the flow of credit to weaker sections of the society, which will continue to be regulated in accordance with existing guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India in the matter.

Representation from aerated water manufacturers

2495. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:

SHRI DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a representation has been received from the aerated